



SEXUAL ASSAULT
SUPPORT CENTRE
OF WATERLOO REGION

2017 - 2018

Annual Report

you
are
not
alone!

SASC STAFF MEMBERS

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Executive Director

Andrea Arthur-Brown,
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& Counsellor/Advocate*

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Trafficking Support Worker*

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Shanna Giroux,
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Joanna Piatkowski, *Volunteer
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TBD, *Office & Donor Administrator*

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Heidi Yandt

Our Mission, Vision And Values

Mission

We support survivors of sexual violence. We listen, facilitate healing, and celebrate resiliency. Using an intersectional feminist approach, we work to transform systems which promote gender-based violence.

Vision

A world without sexual violence and oppression.

Values

1. Sexual violence is both a crime and a human rights violation.

- Survivors are never responsible for assaults committed against them.
- Full responsibility for any sexual assault lies with the perpetrator.
- Any sexual act between a child and an adult constitutes sexual assault, the responsibility for which lies solely with the adult.
- Sexual assault can have a profound impact on survivors' lives - physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally.
- Each individual, our community, and our society has a responsibility to both provide support to people who have been sexually assaulted and to work toward ending sexual violence.

2. Survivors of sexual violence have the right to control their own bodies and their own path to healing.

- Survivors have the right to access feminist, trauma-informed supports and services.
- Survivors have the right to confidentiality.
- Adult survivors have the right to choose whether or not to report an assault to authorities.
- Every person has the right to full access to reproductive health care and reproductive justice.

3. An expression of social inequality, sexual violence is a gendered issue; the vast majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by men against women and children.

The sexual assault of a woman takes place within a social, political, cultural and economic context of historical disadvantage and oppression.

- Prevailing social attitudes often normalize and perpetuate sexual violence.
- Institutions such as law enforcement agencies, the judicial system, and the medical system are often sexist and punitive and can work to re-victimize survivors.
- In order to bring about broad-based social change, prevention-oriented education and feminist advocacy are essential.
- The work required to end both the causes and effects of sexual violence needs to be led and directed by women and non-binary individuals because of the power imbalance between these groups and men in society.
- A feminist analysis recognizes that men's socialization processes can serve as barriers to male-identified survivors reaching out and receiving support; we are committed to making our services accessible to all genders.

4. All forms of oppression are damaging. Sexism is but one of the intersecting oppressions used to violate and control. The prevalence and impact of sexual assault is compounded by these oppressions. Others forms of oppression include, but are not limited to, racism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination based on cultural, ethnic or religious background. These oppressions, which are systemic and pervasive on individual and organizational levels, establish and maintain unequal power relationships in society. It is essential to our vision and direction that we recognize the historical contribution to the anti-sexual violence movement made by women with intersecting identities; criticism that the feminist movement has excluded them is valid and these voices must be heard at our Centre.

5. We promote the self-care and wellness of those working at our Centre; this is a political tool that sustains us in our work.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

FRIENDS:

This year has been a significant year for the agency, with plenty of changes, challenges, and triumphs. I am humbled and honoured to have been the Board President for this year. I witnessed the incredible strength, growth, and resiliency of the staff, volunteers, board and those we serve this past year.

We finalized our Strategic Plan and began to work on the items identified for this year. We focused on infrastructure growth through hiring for new positions and starting the Anti-Human Trafficking Program, as well as completing some basic renovations to provide us with the meeting and office space we needed for our increased staff team.

To enhance our financial resiliency, we've hosted a number of fundraising events and benefited from a number of other events. This included a wonderful night of food, fun, and masks at our annual gala in November, raising a record breaking \$23,000 for the Centre! Once again, we were one of the recipients of the Stone Soup event, as well as other third-party events throughout the year. We also made successful appeals to the Region of Waterloo and City of Cambridge for additional funding in the wake of the overwhelming demand for services this year.

All of this has been wonderful, and yet we have been faced with a significant increase in demand for the services of the agency. The #MeToo movement, of which you'll read more about throughout our annual report, had significant impacts around the world and Waterloo Region was no exception.

I am incredibly proud to say I am a supporter of the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region at any time, but never more so than this past year. The response of the staff and volunteers to these challenges, and other changes, has blown me away. Change is difficult in the best of times, but to deal with change, while also dealing with high demands, shows how amazing both this agency is and the people involved with it are.

Please join me in supporting SASC by volunteering, becoming a donor, being an advocate, attending events and/or through social media. A wave starts with a ripple in the water, and every little bit helps.

Sincerely,

Susan Prange, President, Board of Directors



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS:

When the #MeToo movement caught on fire this past October, our Centre was flooded with calls for support like no other time in our 29-year herstory. Throughout our annual report, you'll see reference to #MeToo's incredible impact across all our program areas.

While we couldn't have predicted the sheer magnitude of the past year, we know that #MeToo didn't happen in a vacuum. Dialogue about sexual violence has been steadily increasing in Canada over the last four years, as has the demand for our services.

It was almost four years ago that the Ghomeshi story broke. Following this, we saw the many allegations against Cosby resurface and multiply, just as he came to perform in our community. Shortly thereafter, former Supreme Court Justice Marie Deschamps released a report exposing a culture of sexual violence in the Canadian Armed Forces. Similar stories made headlines about the RCMP. Next there was a storm about the prevalence and response to sexual violence at Canadian universities and colleges. Then in February of last year, the Globe and Mail released a scathing investigative series on police responses to sexual violence across our nation. It's at this point that #MeToo movement took center stage.

With each development over the last four years, our Centre was called to respond... and without fail we did. Sometimes our response included issuing a public statement and speaking to every media outlet in the community. Sometimes our response looked like meticulously reviewing university policies and providing feedback. Sometimes our response resulted in the development of a community task force. And sometimes, our response was very quiet, behind closed doors, one on one with survivors.

This is what it means to be a community-based Sexual Assault Support Centre. This is what makes us unique and so critical to our community. We advocate at the individual level and the systematic level to create change, and we show up when our community and when survivors need us.

Friends, because of this growth in dialogue about sexual violence, our waiting lists are double what they were at this time last year. Please help us continue to show up when called upon. Become a monthly donor; it means so much to us. Advocate for funding for us at all levels of government. Join in our fundraising efforts. Share our social media posts. Volunteer.

Help us live out our motto to survivors: You are not alone.

Sincerely,

Sara Casselman, Executive Director

HIGHLIGHT OF SERVICES

24 Hour Support Line

Our 24 Hour Support Line is available to anyone who has experienced sexual violence. With support available in more than 50 languages, this telephone line is supplemented by accompaniments to the hospital, police station and courthouse.

Counselling, Advocacy and Support Groups

Our counselling program includes individual counselling for people who have been sexually assaulted recently or historically, as well as support for friends and family. We also offer group counselling, workshops, practical assistance and advocacy.

Public Education Program

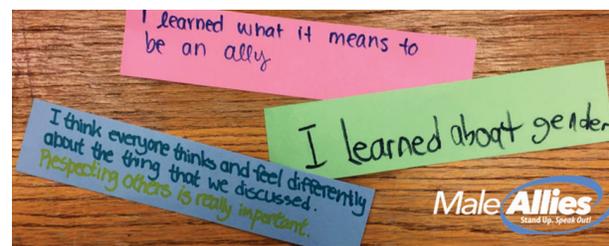
This program provides practical and emotional support to women who have experienced violence in their relationship as they navigate the Family Court System. This program provides support with system navigation, information, referrals, and accompaniments.

Anti-Human Trafficking Program

This program provides wrap-around services to those experiencing sexual exploitation and those at risk. Support includes: counselling, advocacy, crisis support, safety planning, accompaniments, practical assistance, support through legal processes, support with housing, connections to community supports, and public education, and outreach.

Family Court Support Program

This program provides practical and emotional support to women who have experienced violence in their relationship as they navigate the Family Court System.



STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICES

Number of support/crisis calls	1190
Unique people receiving individual counselling	391
Total number of counselling sessions	1802
People in closed group sessions	41
People in open group sessions	50
E-counselling sessions provided	50
Online Chat Support sessions (pilot)	31
Advocacy and accompaniments provided	139
Practical assistance provided	112
Public education events	205
Hours worked by volunteers	8861

OUR COLLABORATION HIGHLIGHTS

Our Centre collaborates with regional and provincial partners to prevent and respond to sexual violence and to enhance our presence in the community. This year, members of our team were active on the following committees:

- Domestic Assault Review Team of Waterloo Region
- Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres
- Sexual Assault Response Team of Waterloo Region
- Sex Workers' Action Network of Waterloo Region
- Waterloo Region Police Services – Sexual Assault Task Force and Related Subcommittees
- YWCA Cambridge's Equal Are We Organizing Committee

PROGRAM REPORTS

Counsellor Advocate Program

BY BY ANDREA ARTHUR-BROWN

Although much of the feminist movement celebrated the uprising of sexual violence awareness globally, here in Waterloo Region our celebration gave way to concern over the rapid rise in the demand for our services. Our counselling waitlist reached all-time highs and continue to grow at a steady pace. Many individuals in our community were plagued with an array of emotions surrounding the #MeToo movement. Our commitment to providing quality services for those impacted by sexual violence remained a priority. Through the uproar, our counsellors provided a space where clients felt safe, supported, heard, and empowered. Some of our clients have shared their experience with our Centre below:

HR SHARES:

"Having survived several years of sexual abuse as a child, it took me some time to understand that the experience had a profound impact on my adult relationships, my employment and health, informing and undermining my success and well-being. The Sexual Assault Support Centre has been essential in giving me the confidence and the skills, specific to this type of personal trauma, in order to create new directions and heal."

Anti-Human Trafficking Program

BY NICKY CARSWELL

This year SASC welcomed a new program! Our dedicated Anti-Human Trafficking Program offers wrap-around services for those who are at risk, experiencing, or have experienced sexual exploitation in the Waterloo Region.

Most victims of sex trafficking are in coercive or abusive situations from which escape is both difficult and dangerous. This program aims to support these individuals in moving forward free from coercion and violence.

This year our focus has been on the development of the program. Since our start in January 2018, we have been busy creating a physical space, developing case management tools, engaging community partners and providing public outreach.

We began rolling out direct services in February and had already provided direct support to 13 individuals by the end of March. Our client numbers have been growing quickly since then, demonstrating the need for this program in our community.

As we work to meet this need, we are more cognizant than ever about the importance of collaboration. One of our goals for the next year is to focus on enhancing a collaborative approach by creating an online service map. This service map will outline HT specific services within our community and will be accessible to everyone.

JW SHARES:

"Meeting with Farhat over the past year has not only given me an immense amount of comfort, but also pushed me to better myself as an individual in general. I had a really hard time finding confidence in myself which reflected in my academics and personal relationships. I started to distance myself from everyone around me. After deciding to go through proper counselling, I was connected with Farhat. I was in a place where I was thinking about dropping my program entirely that I worked so hard for to get into; simply because I was in a place where I thought I wasn't deserving or couldn't succeed. Farhat showed me time after time that I was deserving and was capable, and that is something I'll forever be grateful for."

CG SHARES:

"I have received lots of help over the years through various counsellors in the region as a survivor. I never had a connection with any of my counsellors until I met my counsellor at SASC. I am open and honest with her and she always checks on me to make sure I am OK. She always is there for me..."

Support Line and Volunteer Program

BY JOANNA PIATKOWSKI

This past year has proven to be an exciting and busy one for the volunteer program. We launched our Online Chat Support Pilot in partnership with the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres. This pilot ran from May to December 2017. Based on it's success, we plan to launch it as permanent service this fiscal year. We quickly learned that Online Chat Support is very much needed within our community as it allows folks to communicate anonymously and with ease, especially for those who prefer communicating via text or online.

We also saw a spike in our Support Line calls this fall. With the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, the demand for our services was at an all-time high and we noticed a 50% increase in calls for the fall and winter months; our volunteers were crucial in addressing these needs and were willing to help whenever needed. In total, our volunteers and staff responded to 1190 calls for support.

The generosity of volunteers who support our work continues to inspire all of us. Whether volunteers are giving their time in our office, on our 24 Hour Support Line or Online Chat Support, through public education, within our Family Court Support Program, or on our Board of Directors, they are truly admired and greatly appreciated.

Public Education Program

BY JOAN TUCHLINSKY

Working with Nicky Carswell in our new Anti-Human Trafficking program, we have expanded our work in raising awareness about human trafficking and providing workshops for those most at risk. This includes an exciting new partnership with the Crime Prevention Council and Registry Theatre to present a play with accompanying curriculum in February 2019.

In January we were invited to be part of a consulting group for the public school board, as an offshoot of the Sexual Health Youth Strategy committee we participate on. We are creating teacher training as well as community resource lists. This will allow us to promote our work, alongside the work of our partner agencies, to teachers and school board staff.

As one of the largest Sexual Assault Centre public education programs in Ontario with three full-time staff (including our Male Allies program) and a dedicated team of volunteers we have been able to expand our

ability to facilitate critical conversations throughout Waterloo Region. High profile stories in the media and the #MeToo campaign fueled the demand for workshops and trainings over the past year. Thank you to our community partners, funders and those who share their passion and time to do the work. Together we are making a difference!

I just wanted to thank you sincerely for coming to WCI and enriching the class beyond my own capacity and experience. Your visit might become a cornerstone in my curriculum. I gathered some feedback from the quiet class and they mentioned the visit to be very informative. Several of them expressed their surprise at including males in the search for solutions. They were quite interested in the way males are changed, with you having sampled a Facebook discussion and alluding to the OHL outreach work.

– STEPHAN LATOUR, W.C.I. TEACHER

Male Allies Program

BY TK PRITCHARD

This year the Male Allies program has experienced exciting new opportunities, growth of our standard programming, and continued nurturing of our valued partnerships.

In the fall we were asked by the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women to be part of a project to create programming for immigrant and racialized young men. In March 2018 we received a Trillium grant to support this work and we are eager to develop this project in collaboration with the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre.

Our work this year with Wilfrid Laurier University manifested in a variety of programs, including a multi-session, men's learning community, in-residence programming for first year students, a workshop for athletic leaders, lectures, workshops for clubs such as the Centre for Women and Trans People, and more.

Our OHL Onside training sessions were delivered to the Kitchener Rangers, Erie Otters, and Flint Firebirds. All the sessions received very positive feedback. We similarly continued our close partnership with the YWCA Cambridge, delivering a mixture of multi-session programs and one-off workshops for youth ages 8-18.

We have also seen the growth of our work with local tech companies as we expand our corporate level offerings. Additionally, as part of our 10th anniversary celebrations, we have hosted open workshops for men in the community, designed a special logo, and shared tailored content on our blog and social media.

"I learned that there is more to being a man. Stereotypes do not define what being a real man is."

– FIRST YEAR LAURIER STUDENT

"I became more aware of situations where I can change my own actions, and when I can speak up."

–TECH WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

"I learned from this training that we have the ability to make an impact on what goes on in the community."

– OHL ONSIDE PARTICIPANT

"Yes, I would recommend it (this workshop) because it will help my fellow peers/athletes be more respectful towards women."

– VARSITY ATHLETE

"TK and Wil came to the staff of Resurrection CSS on our professional development day to build our understanding of sexual violence and how we reinforce unhealthy messages. The team from SASC were wonderful to help prepare and in their delivery of the session. They were flexible to come to the school and meet with our team about the services and types of educational programming. The session they delivered was very engaging, well-prepared, informative, and professional. Since then many teachers have reached out to have them deliver programming in their classroom. In addition to the educational services that the Male Allies program has been offering, I continue to refer young people to get support for their healing after an experience of sexual abuse."

– AISLINN CLANCY, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER, WCDSB

Family Court Support Program

BY SYDNEY PIATKOWSKI

What a year it has been for the Family Court Support Program (FCSP)! In July 2017, our former Family Court Support Worker Joanna was offered a position as our Volunteer & Support Line Coordinator and I joined the staff team as our Family Court Support Worker. I want to thank Joanna for the crucial support she provided to our clients as well as the guidance she has given me as a new worker. With the help of our student placement, Stephanie Hunte, we held our first Family Court Peer Support Group, which focused on navigating the family court system. We have also started hosting quarterly debriefing meetings for our amazing volunteers who accompany women to court.

On March 1st 2018, the Government of Ontario promised increased funding to the FCSP as part of "It's Never Okay: Ontario's Gender-Based Violence Strategy." Given that the demand for services in this program outweighs our resources, we are truly looking forward to this increase in the time ahead.

Here's what some of the women in our FCSP shared with us this year:

"Sometimes abusers use the courts to continue the cycle of abuse. From the first time I sat down crying in the little office in the court house, to today, I have known I don't have to face this alone. The women at SASC have been with me whenever I needed them every step of the way and I cannot express my gratitude enough. Having someone there who understands the cycle of abuse and intimidation tactics and can help you through it is like having a midwife, they will be there holding your hand through the pain and tears. Thank you to everyone at SASC."

"Sydney is AMAZING. I think I have let her know already just how invaluable her service and support has been to me since we connected. She is not only knowledgeable and able to offer various levels of assistance (practical help, emotional support, information, resources, advocacy), but she is thorough, supportive, patient, and always does everything with kindness and professionalism (towards her clients and others). She is dealing with women in crisis who are experiencing trauma reactions, and she somehow isn't fazed or overwhelmed, she handles everything beautifully. I'd like to express my sincerest gratitude to Sydney for everything she has done for me and my family (even though my case is still ongoing)."

STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS FAMILY COURT SUPPORT PROGRAM

Number of new women supported	115
Safety plans created	67
Court accompaniments	79

VOLUNTEER MEMBERS IN 2017–2018

Aidan Oczkowski	Emily Cox	Katrina Rossi	Marilyn Barton	Sarah Gilbert Resendes
Alana Freiburger	Emily Sousa	Kelsea Schaefer	Mary Timmer	Sarah Wiley
Alana Rizos	Emily West	Kelty MacVicar	Melanie Baker	Sehrish Haroon
Alana Zuber	Gitta Arvola	Keren Mann	Milena Urbanjac	Shelley White
Alexis Gallant	Grace Schwenck	Kiera Drew	Nafisa Hussain	Shirley Lichti
Amandeep Pabla	Gulin Aydin	Landon Jennings	Olivia Yu	Sophie Whitcomb
Angela Van Stee	Heidi Yandt	Laura Black	Rabia Tariq	Stephanie Hunte
Anika Williams Hewitt	Jaspreet Thandi	Laura Coakley	Raquel Damiao	Supriya Sethi
Ariel Berkeley	Jennie Le	Leah Bremner	Rawan Hussein	Susan Prange
Barb Eichholz	Jenn Love	Leona Bruijns	Rebecca Knapp	Tara Innes
Bianca Boboc	Jennifer Andrews-Coffey	Lisa Evans	Renee Groux	Taylor Damaren
Brittany Buck	Jill Kolb	Madison Harper	Sakana Gnanasegaram	Thanuja Selvanayagam
Carlyn Chorny	Joan Williams	Maggie Hamel-Smith	Samantha Iannuzzi	Tina Wallace
Caroline Kim	Karen Coco	Maia Norman	Samantha White	Vaiva Dzemionas
Deborah Strauss	Kasey Lohnes	Maja Veletanlic	Sara Fazal	
Dianne Piluk	Kasey Politano	Manuela Estrada	Sarah Burley	
Elizabeth Price	Katie Cowie-Redekopp	Margaret Campbell-Boyle	Sarah Ferland	

MALE ALLIES VOLUNTEERS IN 2017–2018

Bob Bender
Graham Jackson
Judah Oudshoorn
Kevin Murray
Scott Calway
Sam Nabi
Scott Piatkowski
Paul Sauder

SASC SUPPORTERS IN 2017–2018

Thank you to our annual funders including:



Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General, the primary funder for our core services, our *Male Survivor Program*, and our *Family Court Support Worker Program*.

(Funding for these Programs is provided by the Government of Ontario. The views expressed in this publication are the views of SASC and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.)



Ministry of Community and Social Services, particularly the **Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Coordination Office**, for funding our *Anti-Human Trafficking Program*



Region of Waterloo

The Region of Waterloo, for their support of our *Counselling and Public Education Programs*



The Astley Family Foundation, for their support of our *Male Allies program*



Wilfrid Laurier University, for their support and partnership to ensure Counselling and Public Education is available to students on campus.



LYLE S. HALLMAN FOUNDATION

The YWCA-Cambridge and the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation, for their support and partnership in our Male Allies program.



The City of Cambridge, for their support of our *Cambridge Counselling Program*

We would also like to extend our gratitude to:

570 News, 96.7 CHYM FM, Country 107.6 Waterloo Region Record Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Marketing Magic Quarry Integrated Communications Inc. Patene Building Supplies

Fresh Look Design fischer CANADA – Stainless Steel Tubing Inc. BarnRaising Associates Michael Klein Open Sesame

Last, but not least

Thank you to the all the amazing individuals, organizations and businesses in our community who generously supported our work this year!

you are not alone!

Graphic design for this annual report by Bob Bender Design / bobbenderdesign.com



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